

## Newsletter for English Teachers March 2006

This Newsletter for English Teachers is a monthly publication by the Information Resource Centers in Germany, focusing on American Studies topics of relevance to secondary school teachers.

### In This Issue: Focus on Statistics

The Challenges Of Globalization \* Globalization and Comparative, Interactive Statistics \* Metric Measurement in the United States \* St. Patrick's Day And Irish Immigrants In The U.S. \* National Women's History Month \* Academy Awards 2006 - Winners And Losers \* Recent Articles \* Web Suggestions \* Upcoming Programs

### THE CHALLENGES OF GLOBALIZATION

The World Bank defines globalization as "the growing integration of economies and societies around the world." Wikipedia, the Internet encyclopedia, describes globalization as "the changes in societies and the world economy that result from dramatically increased international trade and cultural exchange." The British magazine *The Economist* recently likened globalization to a line from a John Lennon song, "Imagine there's no countries. It isn't hard to do." Clearly, globalization means different things to different people.

In this State Department e-journal, the phenomenon of globalization is examined from a variety of angles. No prescriptions or definitive answers are offered. Instead, experts debate such questions as: Where is globalization headed? Does globalization help more people than it harms? What are the effects of globalization on religious attitudes? Is there a connection between liberal trade policies and a country's economic growth rate, between economic progress and a growth in freedom, human rights, and democracy? Is globalization changing the way we work or even the way we think? What is the effect of American popular culture on the local cultures of countries around the world? Do open borders and high tech make life easier for criminal and terrorist networks? What threats are posed by global pandemics in an age when people and viruses can jet around the world in hours?

One indisputable point through all the discussions is that globalization is here to stay. As one expert said, "The prior waves of globalization were institutional, were commercial, where the central actors were trading companies. Today there is a globalization of individuals, and that is a very important difference."



#### The Challenges of Globalization

U.S. Department of State  
e-journal February 2006.

<http://usinfo.state.gov/journals/itgic/0206/ijge/ijge0206.htm>

#### Video Feature:

<http://usinfo.state.gov/journals/itgic/0206/ijge/globalization.htm>

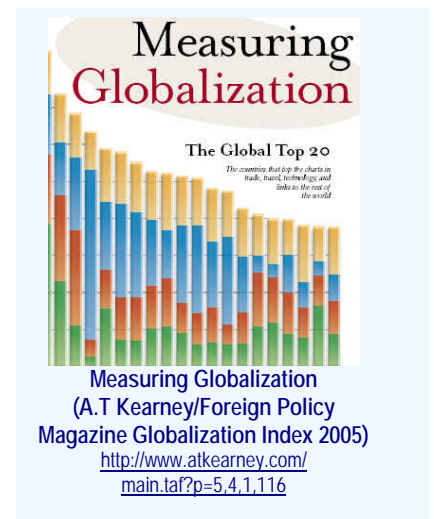
#### Related Webchats:

[http://usinfo.state.gov/usinfo/Products/Webchats/Webchat\\_Archive.html](http://usinfo.state.gov/usinfo/Products/Webchats/Webchat_Archive.html)

## GLOBALIZATION AND COMPARATIVE, INTERACTIVE STATISTICS

When it comes to the most globalized countries in the world today, you might be in for a few surprises. According to the annual Globalization Index published by A.T. Kearney/FOREIGN POLICY Magazine, Singapore, Ireland and Switzerland are the top three, with the United States following at rank 4 and Germany at rank 21, behind Slovenia and Malaysia. The Globalization Index measures the interconnectedness of countries with each other and with the global community overall. In the report "Measuring Globalization", 62 countries are compared according to factors such as trade and foreign direct investment, Internet usage, international tourism and travel and other international exchanges as well as participation in international organizations.

The Globalization Index is just one example of how statistics can help us to understand the world we live in. The United Nations, the OECD and other institutions offer several online resources where you can use statistics interactively. On these websites you can compare statistical information about the population, environment or the economy, create graphs or even model the world in 2020.



### Read more:

- **United Nations Cyberschoolbus**  
Create graphs and compare all countries of the world according to population, health, economy, technology and environment figures on this United Nation's website. Be sure to click on the link above the graph to learn about the units of measurement and data collection methods of the statistics you are examining.  
<http://cyberschoolbus.un.org/infonation3/menu/advanced.asp>
- **OECD Country Statistical Profiles**  
Select a country from pull-down menus for an overview of population, economics, education, science and quality of life figures. Click on the graph symbols on the right hand side for comparisons with other countries. "This statistical profile, updated yearly, is a snapshot of data selected from more than 40 statistical databases available on SourceOECD, our online library. The red i's in the second column provide links to the full databases on SourceOECD, where more up-to-date data and longer time series can be found."  
<http://stats.oecd.org/WBOS/default.aspx?DatasetCode=CSP5>
- **International Futures Model**  
Project future trends with this web-based model that allows users to generate in-depth, year-by-year projections through 2020 for a large number of variables. Topics covered include demographic, economic, energy, socio-political and environmental factors. The model was created by the U.S. National Intelligence Council (NIC). The NIC reports on long-term views of the future and key global trends and their projected influence world events.  
<http://ifsmode.org/>  
NIC 2020 Project Report "Mapping the Future"  
[http://www.cia.gov/nic/NIC\\_globaltrend2020\\_intro.html](http://www.cia.gov/nic/NIC_globaltrend2020_intro.html)
- **Globalization Urbanization and Migration (GUM)**  
Use pull-down menus to compare data sets, pie charts and maps for more than 100 metropolitan

areas (over 1 million in population) and data from more than 50 countries. The GUM site is an on-going collaborative research site and network oriented towards gathering empirical data at the urban-level to measure immigration in cities around the world. Supported by a grant from the George Washington University Center for the Study of Globalization  
<http://gstudynet.com/gum>

### Reading International Statistics - The Right Way

The data for international statistical comparisons compiled for the Globalization Index or by international organizations usually use data that has been collected by the respective countries' statistical offices. It is important to bear in mind that the presentation of figures as well as the units of measurement used in different countries is not always readily comparable and that the data might have to be converted into a consistent format. All reputable sources of statistical data therefore explain their methods of comparing international data.

**USCENSUSBUREAU** *Helping You Make Informed Decisions* The Census Bureau is the major statistical agency in the United States. The U.S. Census Bureau website contains a wealth of statistical information about the U.S. people and its economy as well as international comparisons — information that is used by the general public and researchers, as well as federal, state, and local governments, in making important decisions. This is how the U.S. Census Bureau explains how it compares national accounts data for different countries:

In order to compare national accounts data for different countries, it is necessary to convert each country's data into a common unit of currency, usually the U.S. dollar. The market exchange rates, which are often used in converting national currencies, do not necessarily reflect the relative purchasing power in the various countries. It is necessary that the goods and services produced in different countries be valued consistently if the differences observed are meant to reflect real differences in the volumes of goods and services produced. The use of purchasing power parities (see Table 1328) instead of exchange rates is intended to achieve this objective.

The method used to present the data shown in Table 1328 is to construct volume measures directly by revaluing the goods and services sold in different countries at a common set of international prices. By dividing the ratio of the gross domestic products of two countries expressed in their own national currencies by the corresponding ratio calculated at constant international prices, it is possible to derive the implied purchasing power parity (PPP) between the two currencies concerned. PPPs show how many units of currency are needed in one country to buy the same amount of goods and services that one unit of currency will buy in the other country.

<http://www.census.gov/prod/2005pubs/06statab/intlstat.pdf>

The composition of the data, the presentation of the data may vary even within the same publication. For example, in the Statistical Abstracts, the U.S. National Data Book, containing statistics on both domestic and international social and economic conditions in the United States, the U.S. population for 2000 is cited in one table as being 281,424,602. In another table, the U.S. population figure for 2005 is cited as 295,507. Does that mean the U.S. population dramatically dropped by more than 280 million people within 4 years? Certainly not. The figure in the table for 2005 was presented in thousands (with a small note of explanation at the beginning of the table), thus 295,507 represents 295,507,000.

In comparing statistics from different sources, it is also important to pay attention to the different notations of numbers in different countries.

United States	=	Germany
1,123	=	1.123
5.678	=	5,678
1,000,000,000 one billion	=	1.000.000.000 eine Milliarde

Read more:

- **Statistical Abstract of the United States 2006 (U.S. Census Bureau)**  
<http://www.census.gov/prod/www/statistical-abstract.html>

### METRIC MEASUREMENT IN THE UNITED STATES

The United States does not use metric units of measurements as its predominant system of measurement. While not mandating metric use in the private sector, the Federal Government has sought to serve as a catalyst in the metric conversion of the country's trade, industry, and commerce. The status of metric conversion in the U.S. varies by sector of the economy.

The following tables indicate how to convert U.S. length, mass and volume units into the metric system.

When you know	multiply by	to find
<b>Length:</b>		
inches (in)	2.54	centimeters (cm)
feet (ft)	30.48	centimeters (cm)
feet (ft)	0.3048	meters (m)
yards (yd)	0.9144	meters (m)
miles (mi)	1.6093	Kilometer (km)
<b>Mass (weight)</b>		
U.S. pints (pt)	0.473	liters (l)
U.S. quart (qt)	0.946	liters (l)
gallons (gal)	3.785	liters (l)
<b>Volume (weight)</b>		
ounces (oz)	28.35	grams (g)
pounds (lb)	0.4536	kilograms (kg)
short ton (t)	0.9072	metric ton (t)

Note: To convert U.S. customary units to metric units, multiply by the conversion factor. To convert metric to U.S. customary units, divide by the conversion factor.

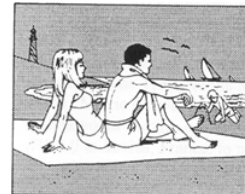
Since 1992, the federal Fair Packaging and Labeling Act (FPLA) has required consumer goods to be labeled in both customary and metric units. That means that most products are sold in quantities of ounces and pounds, with a metric equivalent shown, e.g. "1 lb (454 g)". Perhaps the most common metric item sold is the "2-liter" bottle of soft drinks. Half-liter (500 ml) and one-liter containers of soft drinks are increasingly sold alongside more traditional 12 oz, 16 oz, 20 oz, and 24 oz (710 ml) sizes. Wine is sold in standard bottles of 750 mL. There are strong efforts underway by industry to allow manufacturers to use metric-only labeling and many states in the U.S. have already adopted laws allowing metric-only labeling.

In science, metric usage is essentially universal. Medicine is generally metric, but where interaction with patients is required, usage is often mixed. Doctors often measure a patient's weight in pounds to compute a dosage of medicine administered in grams or milliliters because metric usage remains low at the individual level. Few Americans would know what to wear if outside temperature were reported to be 20° Celsius. Highway speed limits are posted in miles per hour and distances are largely announced in miles, yards, or feet, although a few dual mile/km signs can be found. Gasoline is sold by the gallon. Domestic airline flights are assigned altitudes in feet.

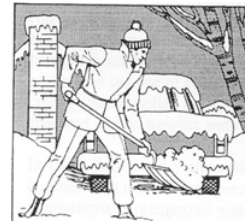
Students are taught the concepts underlying the metric system, but they do not necessarily have an intuitive sense of what the units mean. The more common metric prefixes are widely known, but not necessarily in connection with the metric system. For example, the letter K is widely accepted as an abbreviation for thousand (e.g., "She earned over 100K last year.").

**Read more:**

- National Institute of Standards and Technology, Laws and Metric Group, Weights and Measures Division  
[http://ts.nist.gov/ts/htdocs/200/202/mpo\\_home.htm](http://ts.nist.gov/ts/htdocs/200/202/mpo_home.htm)



20° Celsius



20° Fahrenheit

## **NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH**

Statistics can offer powerful insights into a society. Consider data that was released for the 2006 Women's History Month in March 2006 by the U.S. Census Bureau:

- 31% of women ages 25 to 29 years who had attained a bachelor's degree or higher in 2004, which exceeded that of men in this age range (26 percent). Eighty-eight percent of women and 85 percent of men in this same age range had completed high school.
- 6.5 women-owned businesses existed in the U.S. in 2002, 20% more than in 1997.
- 77 cents is the amount women age 15 and older, who worked full time, year-round, earned for every \$1 their male counterparts earned in 2004. This amount is up from 76 cents for every dollar in 2003. 91 cents is the amount women in the District of Columbia, who worked full time, year-round, earned for every \$1 their male counterparts earned in 2004. D.C. led all states or state equivalents in this category.
- 82.5 million women the United States are mothers. 1.9 is the average number of children that women ages 40 to 44 had given birth to as of 2004, down from 3.1 children in 1976, the year the Census Bureau began collecting such data.



In 1981, the U.S. Congress passed a resolution establishing National Women's History Week. In 1987, Congress expanded the week into a month. Every year since, Congress has passed a resolution for Women's History Month, and the U.S. President has issued a proclamation.

#### **Women's History Month, 2006:**

##### **A Proclamation by the President of the United States of America**

"For generations, women across our great land have helped make our country stronger and better. They have improved our communities and played a vital role in achieving justice and equal rights for all our citizens. During Women's History Month, we celebrate the many contributions women make to our society.

At the end of the 19th century, pioneers Jane Addams and Ellen Starr opened the doors of Hull House to serve impoverished and immigrant families in the Chicago community. Presidential Medal of Freedom winner Annie Dodge Wauneka worked to educate her native Navajo community about preventing and treating disease. In 1955, Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a city bus in Montgomery, Alabama, helping to inspire a nationwide movement for equal justice under the law. Recently, our Nation said goodbye to another remarkable American woman and courageous civil rights leader, Coretta Scott King, who helped call America to its founding ideals. ... This month, I encourage all Americans to join me in celebrating the extraordinary achievements and contributions of American women."

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2006/02/20060227-5.html>

Deutsch: <http://amerikadienst.usembassy.de/us-botschaft-cgi/ad-detailad.cgi?lfdnr=1975>



Women of Influence  
<http://usinfo.state.gov/products/pubs/womeninfln/>

To commemorate International Women's Day, March 8, and National Women's History Month, the U.S. Department of State issued an electronic publication that highlights the achievements of some notable women in American history and their role in shaping today's democratic society in the United States. These women - from the Native-American Sacagawea, who guided white settlers through a vast wilderness, to Sojourner Truth, who fought for the end of slavery and equal rights for all, to Jeannette Rankin, who spoke for the health of women and children in Congress - believed that they had a contribution to make and did not shrink from the obstacles in their way. This account of their accomplishments is a reminder that all societies benefit from the talents and expertise of their women.

#### **Read more:**

- U.S. Census Bureau, Facts for Features, Women's History Month: March 2006  
[http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/facts\\_for\\_features\\_special\\_editions/006232.html](http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/facts_for_features_special_editions/006232.html)
- U. S. National Women's History Month:  
[http://usinfo.state.gov/scv/history\\_geography\\_and\\_population/population\\_and\\_diversity/women\\_in\\_the\\_us/national\\_womens\\_history\\_month.html](http://usinfo.state.gov/scv/history_geography_and_population/population_and_diversity/women_in_the_us/national_womens_history_month.html)
- National Women's History Project  
<http://www.nwhp.org/>
- About the USA > U.S. Society > Women  
<http://usa.usembassy.de/society-women.htm>

## ST. PATRICK'S DAY AND IRISH IMMIGRANTS IN THE U.S.



Two New Yorkers watch the 2005 Saint Patrick's Day Parade from behind green-tinted shamrock glasses.  
(© AP/WWP)

As the Globalization Index indicates, Ireland, ranked number 2, is a very globalized nation. But even centuries before globalization became a buzzword, the Irish did their part to connect with the rest of the world when they immigrated in large numbers to the United States. The effects of this immigration are still visible in the United States today - as for example, in the celebration of St. Patrick's Day.

March 17th is a day to check your closet and make sure you have something green to wear - it's St. Patrick's Day, said to be the only national holiday observed outside its native land. The observance honors Bishop Patrick, born in England, who brought Christianity to Ireland in the fifth century, using a shamrock to illustrate divinity. The day has been marked in America since it was a colony. New York City's huge parade has taken place every year since 1762. The greatest number of Irish immigrants arrived in the U.S. in the middle of the 19th century, when the home country was reeling from the potato famine. Now, 34-million Americans claim Irish descent - more than eight times the population of Ireland itself. Irish is the nation's second most frequently reported ancestry, trailing only those of German ancestry. Everybody is Irish and everything is green on St. Patrick's Day! People paint their faces, put on

green jackets and sweatshirts and even the U.S. President wears a green tie to work.

Irish pubs all over the country celebrate Ireland's national holiday and some even serve green beer to commemorate the occasion. Americans love it - they are in the top ten group of beer drinkers world-wide. In 2003 they consumed 21.6 gallons of beer per capita. In comparison, Germans consumed 117.8 liters of beer. (*Deutscher Brauer-Bund e. V.: Die Deutsche Brauwirtschaft in Zahlen, Getränkeverbrauch je Einwohner, www.brauerbund.de*). Which nation drinks more beer per capita?

### Read more:

- U.S. Census Bureau, Facts for Features, Irish-American Heritage Month (March) and St. Patrick's Day (March 17) 2006  
[http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/facts\\_for\\_features\\_special\\_editions/006328.html](http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/facts_for_features_special_editions/006328.html)
- March 2006 Proclaimed Irish American Heritage Month  
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2006/02/20060224-8.html>
- About the US > American Holidays  
[http://usa.usembassy.de/etexts/hol/celebrate\\_stpatrick.pdf](http://usa.usembassy.de/etexts/hol/celebrate_stpatrick.pdf)
- Library of Congress: Irish Immigration  
<http://memory.loc.gov/learn/features/immig/irish.html>
- America Goes Green for St. Patrick's Day  
<http://usinfo.state.gov/scv/Archive/2006/Mar/08-537998.htm>

## ACADEMY AWARDS - WINNERS AND LOSERS



What else can numbers tell us? Is there a connection between ticket sales and Oscars? In the entertainment world, box-office success is usually regarded as the true measure of a film's greatness -- but not this year. During the past 20 years, big-money films dominated many of the categories, with the typical Best Picture winner, ranking an average No. 9 at the U.S. box office for the year it was released. Nearly half were in the top five at the box office, and three led in overall ticket-sales (*Titanic* in 1998; *Forrest Gump* in 1995; and *Rain Man* in 1989). Small films were often seen as long shots until 1996, when *The English Patient* won nine Oscars (including Best Picture), and the independent film (known as "indie" films) era began, with films like *Good Will Hunting* and *Boys Don't Cry* to follow. The winner for Best Picture this year, *Crash*, an examination of race relations in Los Angeles, has taken in barely more than 1/10th of *King Kong's* worldwide gross of \$543 million.

This year none of the five movies nominated for Best Picture were box-office hits; and, most of the nominees were financed and made outside the studio system. Action thrillers and extravaganzas took a back seat to relatively low-budget films with something serious to say about such important subjects as race relations, the stigmatizing of gays, the politics of revenge and civil liberties. That doesn't mean that Hollywood has not helped to shape political debates and change public attitudes in the past. *To Kill a Mockingbird* exposed the evils of anti-Semitism and racism, while *The Grapes of Wrath* brought home the despair of poverty in a way no other medium could match. George Clooney, named Best Supporting Actor for the espionage thriller *Syriana*, said, "We're the ones who talked about AIDS when it was just being whispered, and we talked about civil rights when it wasn't really popular. This academy, this group of people gave Hattie McDaniel an Oscar in 1939 when blacks were still sitting in the backs of theaters," said Clooney. "I'm proud to be part of this academy."



Paul Haggis, the director and co-writer of *Crash*, said in his acceptance speech, "Bertolt Brecht said that art is not a mirror ... to hold up to society, but a hammer with which to shape it. So I guess," he said, pointing at his Oscar, "this is ours." Best-actress winner Reese Witherspoon summed up this year's Oscar spirit when she told the audience: "I'm just trying to matter." In 2005, as reflected by the quality and seriousness of many of the most honored films, Hollywood did matter.

### Read more:

- Academy Awards 2006 Special VOA Coverage (including audio/video files)  
<http://author.voanews.com/english/Academy-Awards-2006.cfm>
- Academy Awards - Box Office  
<http://www.boxofficemojo.com/oscar/>
- Top 100 Movie Grosses Of All Time  
<http://www.ercboxoffice.com/erc/reports/top100alltime.html>
- About the USA > Arts & Entertainment > Film  
<http://usa.usembassy.de/arts-film.htm>



## RECENT ARTICLES

### **The Murrow Doctrine**

Lemann, Nicholas. New Yorker, January 23, 2006, v81 #45, pp38-43

The author examines the journalistic career of broadcast pioneer Edward R. Murrow, whose famous confrontation with Senator Joseph McCarthy in 1954 has recently been turned into a movie by George Clooney – the critically acclaimed *Good Night and Good Luck*. Murrow eventually left CBS accepting a job from President Kennedy as director of the United States Information Agency (USIA), the forerunner to current public diplomacy programs of the U.S State Department.

<http://infoalert.usembassy.de/01-06/g2.htm>

### **Spielberg's *Munich***

Schoenfeld, Gabriel. Commentary, Feb 06, v.121, #2, pp34-42

"Thirty-three years after the event, we now have a film by a great director memorializing the massacre of eleven Israeli athletes by Palestinian terrorists at the 1972 Olympics in Munich, Germany. But, although much hyped in advance, it has not exactly been a blockbuster at the box office, and it has also engendered considerable controversy... For his own part, Spielberg has said that he made *Munich* out of a simple desire to commemorate the slaughtered Jews of Munich. He also believes that the film is relevant to our own troubled times, and specifically to the current war against terror.."

<http://infoalert.usembassy.de/01-06/g3.htm>

### **Beyond Sprawl: Rethinking Humanity's Habitats**

Wagner, Cynthia G. The Futurist, January/February 2006, v40, #1, pp35-43

How will technology affect where we live in the future? How will where we live affect our technology? This special section tries to provide answers through articles by several futurists, who examine the challenges facing tomorrow's human habitat planners.

<http://infoalert.usembassy.de/01-06/e20.htm>

### **Value-Added Assessment and Systemic Reform: A Response to the Challenge of Human Capital Development.**

Hershberg, Theodore. Phi Delta Kappan, December 2005, v87, #4, pp276-, 8p

In this current and historical review of the need for the reform of American schools, the author discusses the minimum standard established by the *No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act* in 2001. He believes, however, that value-added models are also necessary and "that the highly competitive global economy of the 21st century requires dramatic improvements in America's schools. While he sees merit in the basic intent of *No Child Left Behind*, he suggests that a shift to value-added assessment, if it is used as the foundation of a comprehensive school reform model, will be the key to raising the achievement of all students."

[http://infoalert.usembassy.de/01-06/order\\_from\\_01-06.htm](http://infoalert.usembassy.de/01-06/order_from_01-06.htm)

### **Youth Helping America. Building Active Citizens: The Role of Social Institutions in Teen Volunteering**

Corporation for National and Community Service. November 2005, 24p

"According to this national study, conducted in collaboration with the U.S. Census Bureau, 15.5 million teenagers volunteered during 2004, contributing more than 1.3 billion hours of service. That translates into a rate of 55% compared to the adult volunteer rate of 29%. Approximately 10.6 million youth – or 38% of the youth population -- have engaged in community service as part of a school activity, but only 5% attributed their volunteer activities to a mandatory school requirement."

<http://infoalert.usembassy.de/01-06/e22.htm>

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## WEB SUGGESTIONS

**The Center for Media Literacy** offers, under the umbrella of the MediaLit Kit™, a framework of theory, practice and implementation — all the necessary ingredients for successfully introducing media literacy into preK-12 classrooms. The Center for Media Literacy (CML) is a nonprofit educational organization that provides public education, professional development and educational resources.

<http://www.medialit.org/>

**The National Archives' Digital Classroom** is a gateway for resources about primary sources, activities and training for educators and students. Documents--diaries, letters, drawings, and memoirs--created by those who participated in or witnessed the events of the past tell us something that even the best-written article or book cannot convey. The use of primary sources exposes students to important historical concepts and analytical skills.

<http://www.archives.gov/education/>

**Primary Source** aims to strengthen teacher knowledge of world history through an interdisciplinary approach. The program works with universities and master teachers to provide graduate courses, seminars, and study tours for K-12 teachers and administrators, as well as curriculum development support and materials for school districts.

<http://www.primarysource.org>

### Meet the Author: Literary Readings in Köln

For more events - please check

[http://duesseldorf.usconsulate.gov/dusseldorf/upcoming\\_events.html](http://duesseldorf.usconsulate.gov/dusseldorf/upcoming_events.html)

**March 14, 2006, 20:00**

**Reading with Dave King and Jan-Josef Liefers (part of Lit.Cologne)**

Dave King will read from his new novel "Homecoming" at Gloria, Apostelnstrasse 11, Köln

**MARCH 17, 2006, 20:30**

**Reading with Joe R. Lansdale (part of Lit.Cologne)**

Polizeipräsidium Köln

**MARCH 18, 2006, 18:30**

**Reading with John Griesemer (part of Lit.Cologne)**

John Griesemer will read from his new collection of stories "Roy auf dem Dach"

Halle Kalk, Neuerburgstrasse, Köln

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